

The background of the slide is an impressionistic painting of a landscape. It features a tall, dark evergreen tree on the left side, with a mix of warm and cool colors like yellows, oranges, pinks, and blues in the sky and foreground, suggesting a misty or sunset scene.

# The role of 'authentic' public participation on public lands surrounding travel management decisions.

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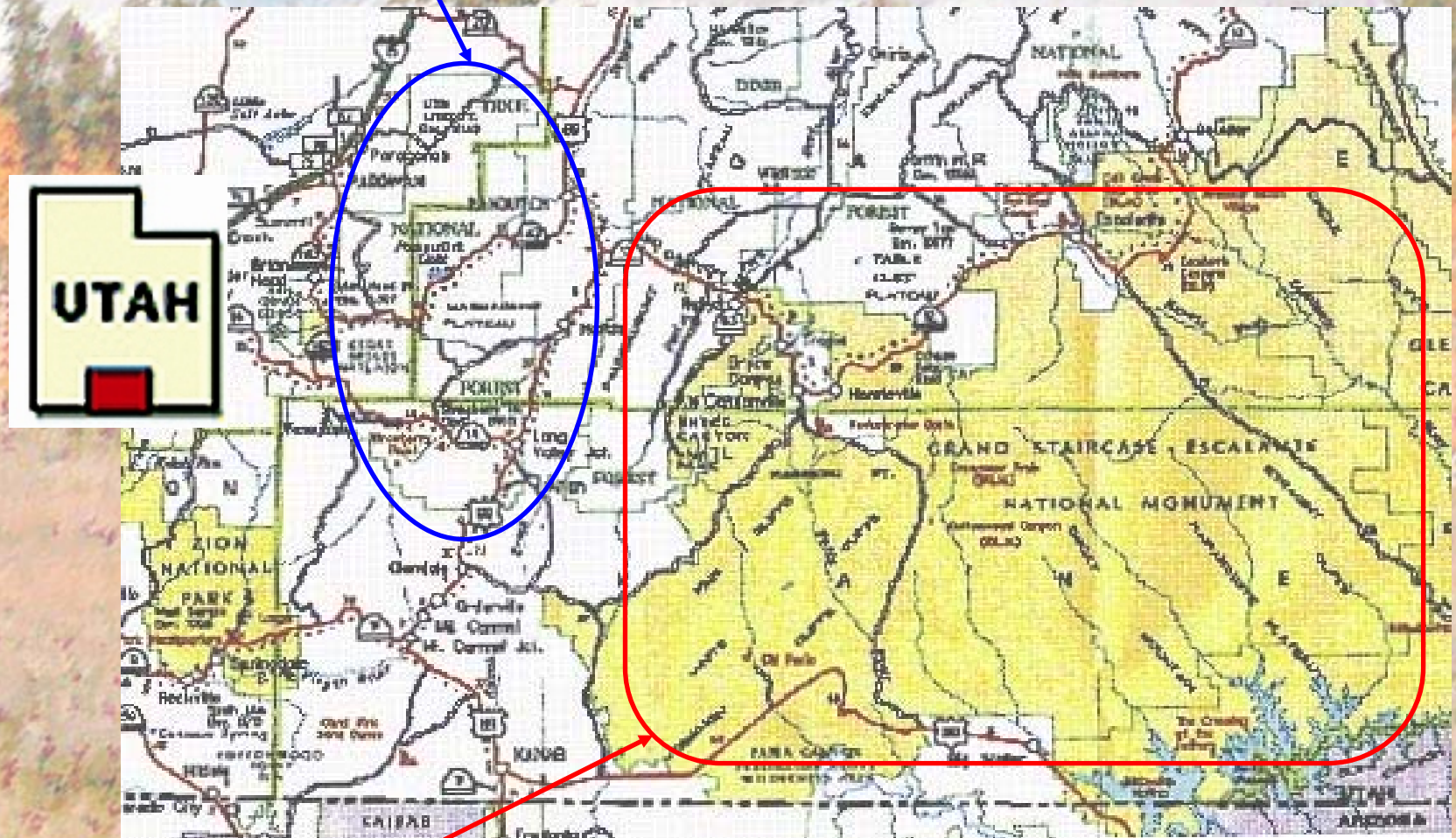
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# Study area

## Dixie National Forest: Cedar City District

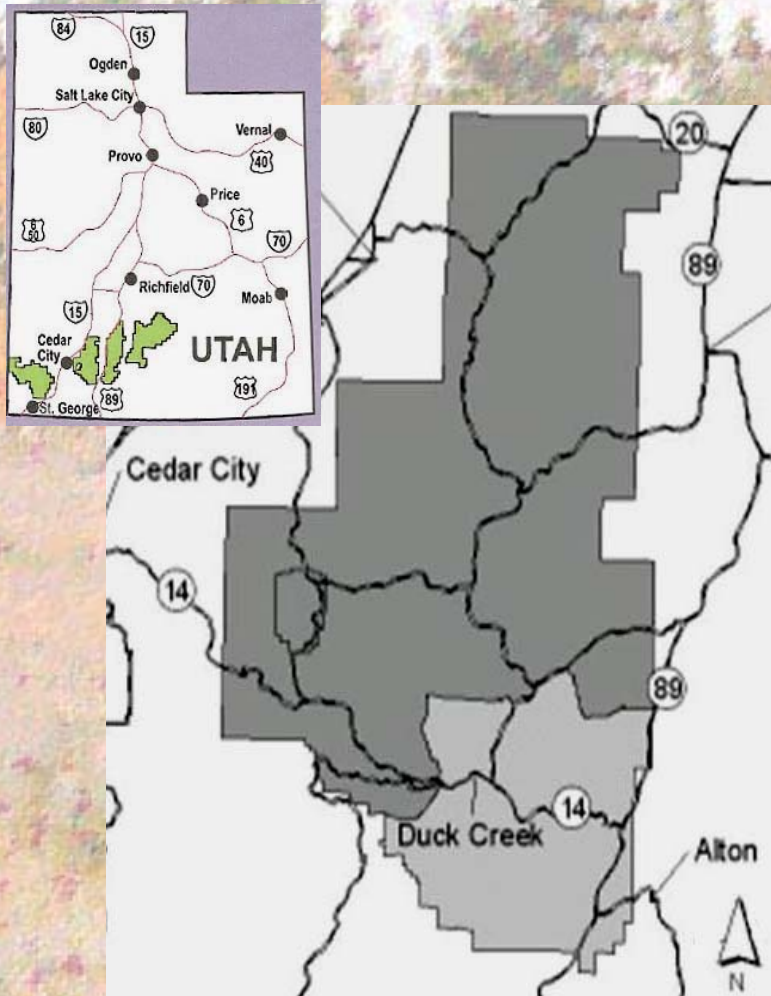


## Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument



# Dixie National Forest (DNF)

(Duck Creek–Swains project area)



- Comprising 93,099 acres
- High road density
- High OHV use; especially from Las Vegas



# DNF public participation:

## Process and outcomes

- Involved public meetings, county input, mapping exercises
- Used adaptive decision-making
- Resulted in NO appeals or litigation



# Grand Staircase–Escalante National Monument (GSENM)



- Comprising 1.9 million acres
- Established by Presidential proclamation
- BLM Managed



# GSENM public participation:

## Process and outcomes

- Involved public meetings, public comment
- Decision “revised” by Washington
- Decisions currently in litigation between BLM & counties



# Research Method

Participant pool:

27 stakeholders participated

Interview instrument:

5 open-ended, semi-structured qualitative questions and 7 ranking quantitative questions



# Participant pool:

- 27 individuals, both local and regional
- 9 participated in BOTH; 9 in DNF; 8 in GSENM
- 12 current and former county, state, and federal employees
- 7 local business owners
- 9 OHV users; 6 environmentalists
- 5 own inholdings on federal land



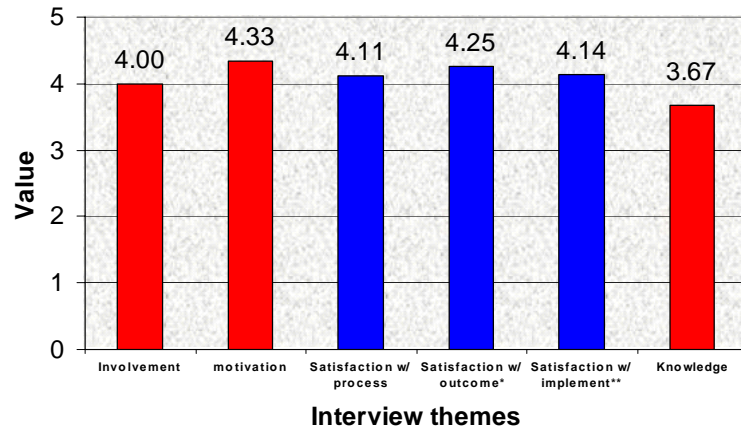
# Question themes:

- Type of involvement
- Satisfaction with process
- Satisfaction with outcomes
  - Decision
  - Implementation
- Knowledge of mandated process
- Future expectations

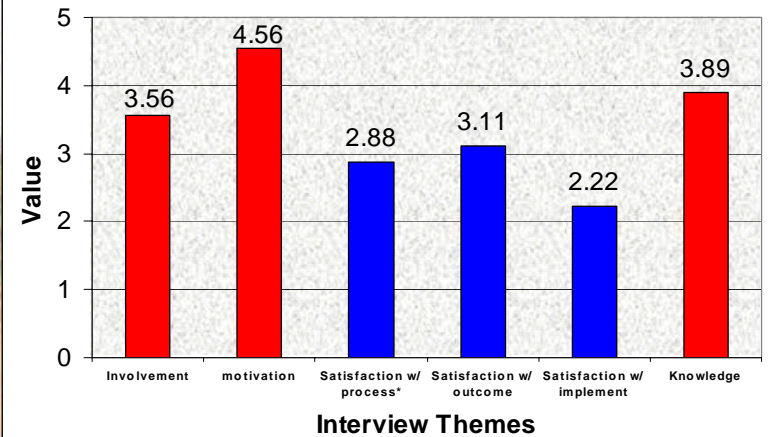


# Results

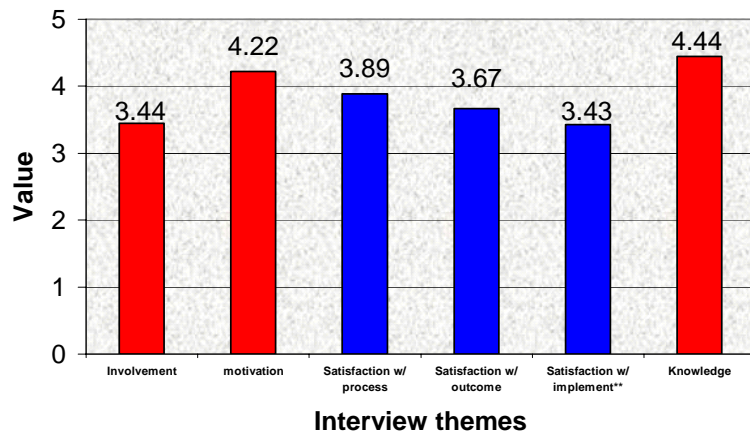
**Participation in DNF process ONLY**



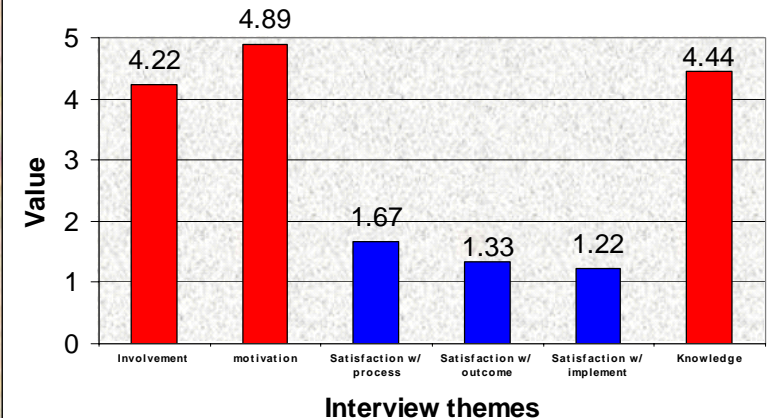
**Participation in GSENM process ONLY**



**Participation in BOTH processes (DNF)**



**Participation in BOTH processes (GSENM)**





# Management Implications:

## Interview subjects provided:

- Suggestions on how to improve management of motorized travel.
- Suggestions on how to improve public participation for motorized travel decisions.



An impressionistic painting of a forest scene. The background is filled with soft, dappled light and a variety of colors including greens, yellows, oranges, and blues, suggesting a dense forest with sunlight filtering through the trees. The overall style is painterly and atmospheric.

# Improving management:



## Identify routes:

“It’s important to identify motorized routes in order to give people that information so that they are not out there developing their own routes or damaging resources on routes that do exist that they are not aware of ... I find that very important.”

- County employee



## **Inclusive involvement:**

“So we decided, well we’ve got to get everyone that has an interest in this together and let them participate in it ... It involved everybody that had an interest that wanted to participate had the opportunity to participate”



# Thinking long-term:

“But for us, the success is long term manageable ... We’re willing to sacrifice that 60 percent so that we’ve got the other that provides a quality experience ... You lost 60 percent of total miles, now you have an opportunity.”

- State employee



# Acceptance and Compliance:

“I think ... there will be more public enjoyment of the forest because of their participation in the planning, more acceptance of the decisions once it's given time to digest ... And I think the agencies will find out that if the public is more aware of what is going on, they'll get the compliance they are after.”

- Agency employee



## **Timely implementation:**

“... they got out on the ground relatively quickly after the decision and actually started doing things that people could see ... There was fencing installed and some interpretation materials posted so that ATV users could understand what was going on out there ... show how we’re going to make this work out there ...”

- *State employee*



## **Additional enforcement:**

“So I think the trails and the signage and everything is great. But I definitely think we need more enforcement so people can’t get away with breaking rules. You are never going to stop it all ... It’s going fairly well but I think it could be better with more enforcement.”

- *Local business owner*



# Future considerations:

“ ... [I would ask] how can we enhance this trails system to handle more people, and to control degradation and protect the environment. How do we take care of sustainability for those that are coming? ... Are we monitoring what we've got out there ... Are we looking ahead to the future?”



# Unbiased management:

“They need to go ahead and get a fast horse, a long rope and round up everybody and get the same message across, because otherwise it’s not sound resource management. You cannot manage part of your population.”

- *Local business owner*



# Balanced management:

“But a lot of the people that we are getting in this area as managers and employees are so far on one side of the spectrum that they can’t focus on what’s reasonable or practical.”

- *Local business owner*



## **Additional training:**

“They have no concept of how to interact with the public and ... everyone who hits that midlevel management in a federal agency needs ... some kind of training in organizational dynamics and interpersonal relationships and working with the public ... So they need to go back and get a social science background ... before they move on in ranks of management.”

- *State employee*



An impressionistic painting of a forest scene. The background is filled with soft, dappled light and a variety of colors including greens, yellows, oranges, and blues, suggesting a sun-dappled forest floor and foliage. The overall style is painterly and atmospheric.

# Improving public participation:



## **Publicize and consider:**

“I think it’s incumbent on the agency to make sure it’s very publicly announced that we’re going through a processes, and to invite people to come to the table. I think it’s incumbent on the agency to consider the remarks of people, and the feelings, and the discourse all the way through the process.”

- *Agency employee*



## **Diverse collaboration:**

“The meeting on the ground, the tours, those kinds of things is where you get your best involvement. I think the best work that we did was ... working with the user groups and ... with county commissioners and state representatives ... with those kind of people, one-on-one, out there on the ground, getting things resolved that way. I think that made the whole difference.”

- Agency employee



## **Consider local expertise:**

“... there’s a whole bunch of people on the ground who have been on the ground for a very long time who understand the country, who have admittedly certain interests ... [agencies] need to see is that some of those interests actually might be their interests and that’s lost because what we have is a huge ‘them’ and ‘us.’”

- *Local business owner*



The background is an impressionistic painting. It features a landscape with trees in shades of green, yellow, and brown. In the lower right, there is a small, dark, indistinct figure that appears to be sitting or standing. The overall style is soft and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a warm, somewhat muted color palette.

# Receptiveness:

“I’ve got the answer ... it works when a manager and a team is receptive to public participation; it doesn’t when they don’t.”

- County employee



## **Visual aids/ face-to-face contact:**

“The on the ground, the map in hand, helps folks visually ... I'll maintain that no matter what they say, most folks are visual learners. Without the visual part, it goes away especially in this situation. If you just present the numbers, you're asking for trouble.”

- *State employee*



## **Comment specifically:**

“Now [if] those people were to each individually ... if those groups would say, ‘... Tell them what roads you feel need to be left open or closed or whatever’ and actually give us substantial data that we could use, that was valuable ... Give us specific comments we can use based on real vital basis. Give us substantial information.”

- Agency employee



# Conclusions:

## Improvements for management of motorized travel:

- Identify routes
- Inclusive involvement of stakeholders
- Thinking long-term
- Creating acceptance and compliance of decisions
- Timely implementation of final decision
- Additional enforcement of rules/regulations
- Consideration of future issues
- Unbiased management
- Balanced management
- Additional training for agency employees



# Conclusions:

Improvements to public participation for motorized travel:

- Publicize input opportunities and consider input
- Involve diverse stakeholders in collaboration
- Consider local expertise
- Improve receptiveness to stakeholder opinions
- Utilize visual aids and face-to-face contact
- Comment specifically



# So what does this mean???

- “Authentic” public participation can take place within the parameters of federally mandated public involvement processes.
- The findings of this research will provide land managers with a potential framework for conducting future decision-making processes in an attempt to increase satisfaction of participants.